

(Washington, DC) – Congresswoman Moore spearheaded a letter signed by 53 other Members of Congress to US Treasury Secretary Paulson today, urging him to work towards strengthening the global commitment to reducing maternal mortality when the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Development Committee meet in Washington, D.C starting tomorrow.

Congresswoman Moore spearheaded the bipartisan letter along with Rep. Lois Capps, Co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues (CCWI), and Rep. Mary Bono Mack, Co-Chair of the CCWI International Task Force.

In 2001, world leaders adopted eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for the year 2015 to commit to reducing global poverty. The fifth Millennium Development Goal, improving maternal health worldwide, with a target of cutting maternal mortality ratios by 75 percent, is often called the heart of the MDGs, because if it fails, the other MDGs likely will too.

Recent figures released by the World Health Organization show that progress towards this goal is lagging, with an annual decline of less than 1 percent in maternal deaths for 2007.

"Every minute of every day a woman dies in pregnancy or childbirth," Rep. Moore said. "Maternal health is clearly not receiving the adequate attention and funding that is needed to meet this most crucial MDG target."

"As a public health nurse who worked closely with young mothers and their families, I know too well that the loss of a mother shatters her family and threatens the well-being of her surviving children," said Rep. Capps. "Tragically, most of the mothers that we are losing in pregnancy or childbirth could have been saved if these women had access to the most basic primary and emergency health care. It is simply unacceptable that we are failing to properly care for these women and girls in the U.S. and abroad. We can and must do better moving forward."

The letter urged Secretary Paulson to "work with other nations to strengthen the investment in our health care systems, and hold governments accountable for the women's lives that are needlessly lost in childbirth." The Members pointed out that, even in the poorest nations, when women have access to basic life-saving care, the vast majority of maternal deaths are

prevented.”

The United States is far from ranking at the top among countries in national maternal health. Ranked 41st, the United States falls behind many other of the industrialized countries.

The World Bank/IMF meetings in Washington, D.C run from April 12-13.

[Click here to see the letter that Congresswoman Moore sent to Secretary Paulson](#)

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